

### **Policy Statement and Eligibility**

Expectant parents who voluntarily seek assistance with an unplanned, or otherwise unwanted pregnancy, are eligible for problem pregnancy services.

Services may be provided to single or married women and the father of the expected child and/or the woman's husband or significant other. Clients are eligible for direct and purchased services.

Special instructions relating to problem pregnancy cases

These clients shall be entered into the protective service (SS-63) tracking system.

At minimum, these are essentially problem-solving services to help the client(s) explore options. If services are limited to this, completion of the CPS-1/CPS-1A (for investigations/family assessments or the **CS-16/CS-16b** (on-going Family-Centered Services is not necessary. Clients are also eligible for more extensive and long-term treatment services, such as direct or purchased counseling. Completion of the CS-16 packet and CS-16b should be used in these situations.

Available services within the community and through the Division, as well as the responsibilities of the Children's Service Worker, should be explained in depth.

### **Exploring Options With the Client(s)**

The Children's Service Worker shall conduct a face-to-face interview with the client(s) to:

1. Determine the client's immediate service needs;
2. Explain assistance that is available through the Division and within the community;
3. Identify the role of Children's Service Worker;
4. Explain confidentiality issues;
5. Encourage and/or facilitate a prenatal medical care plan;
6. Obtain pertinent social history (use of the genogram and ecomap in the CS-16 packet may be helpful in this);
7. Provide the client(s) with information and available reading material;
8. Initiate appropriate referral services in behalf of the client(s):
  - Refer to the Family Support Division (FSD) if appropriate (unborn child, medical assistance, general relief); and

- Refer to appropriate community resource for related services not provided by this agency (relinquishment services with another agency, prenatal medical care, etc.).
9. Provide supportive counseling to parent(s) and possibly family about daily living and decision making;
  10. Explain and discuss options with mother and, when possible, the named father of the child;
  11. Assess the needs and preferences of the client(s);
  12. Document in the case record if the:
    - Named father of the child denies paternity;
    - Mother and/or named father wishes to parent the child;
    - Mother and/or named father identify someone else who they intend to care for the child;
    - Mother and/or named father requests relinquishment; and
    - Mother and/or named father wants to terminate the pregnancy.
  13. Explore the need and desire of the client for longer-term counseling, treatment, or supportive services; and
  14. Record all activities in the case record within 30 days.

### **When Parenting is the Plan**

When parenting the child is the plan of the client, the Children's Service Worker shall:

1. Provide information regarding public assistance programs and facilitate application;
2. Discuss and/or facilitate day care planning;
3. Refer for parenting classes, if this is an assessed need;
4. Provide supportive counseling in the areas of adjustment to parental role and responsibilities; and
5. Visit at the hospital following delivery and refer to local health resources.

### **When Private Placement With a Relative or Guardian of the Client's Choice is the Plan**

When private placement with a relative or guardian (chosen by the client) is the plan, the Children's Service Worker shall:

1. Assure that the specified caretaker is involved in the decision-making process with the client(s) and fully understands the legal ramifications of the placement; and
2. Explore with the client(s) if the specified caretaker is capable of caring for the child and willing to cooperate with the client(s) in establishing a permanency plan for the child.

### **When Relinquishment/Adoption is the Plan**

When relinquishment/adoption of the child is the plan of the client, the Children's Service Worker shall:

1. Obtain detailed background information and health history to be shared with the adoptive parent(s) using the CW-15, Placement Planning Form. (This may be completed with assistance from other family members.);
2. Screen for Indian status;

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| Related Subject: Section 4, Chapter 19.3 for Determining Child's Indian Status. |
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3. Visit at the hospital following the delivery to discuss current feelings and confirm the decision;
  - Obtain completed form CW-16, Birth Information Regarding Child To Be Placed For Adoption, from the hospital staff at this time or when child is released from the hospital;

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| NOTE: Client(s) may see and/or visit with the baby in the hospital and foster home prior to the court hearing. |
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4. Have the client(s) sign any necessary forms according to local court procedure;
5. Inform the client(s) of the options to:
  - File an affidavit with the court granting the adoption which will authorize the release of identifying information to the child at age 21; or

- Register with Missouri Adoption Registry, administered by the Division, to authorize contact by the child after the child reaches age 21.

Inform the client(s) that either decision can be made at a later date.

6. Inform the client(s) that the child may request non-identifying information about background upon reaching 21.

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| Related Subject: Section 5, Chapter 2.6.6, Adoption Information Registry. |
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7. Provide continued supportive counseling;

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| NOTE: Client(s) may change his/her mind about relinquishment and have the baby returned to his/her physical and legal custody any time prior to the court hearing. |
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8. Prepare the client(s) for the court appearance and attend the hearing if appropriate;
9. Help the client(s) deal with the permanent separation from the child;
10. Provide the relinquishing parent(s) with non-identifying information about the adoptive parents;
11. Make the client(s) aware of the future availability of agency services; and
12. Emphasize that post-relinquishment services are available until the client(s) no longer needs support.

### **When Termination of the Pregnancy is the Plan**

When termination of the pregnancy is the plan of the client, the Children's Service Worker shall:

1. Refer the client to an appropriate facility for further consultation; and
2. Assist the client in obtaining family planning information.

### **Case Closing**

The Children's Service Worker and client(s) should mutually agree that no further services are needed and the case should be closed.

Close the case from the protective service (SS-63) tracking system.